

TRANSEND

A newsletter for employees, retirees and stakeholders of the Arizona Department of Transportation

May 2006

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Nippy Feldhake – ADOT's 'champion' back from the Winter Olympics

COVER STORY ON
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Nippy Feldhake, of Tucson Construction, returns from the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy – his ninth Olympic event as a volunteer. Behind Nippy is the village of Sauze d'Oulx. The mountains in the background are the Alps, where some of the Olympic ski events were held.



Victor M. Mendez
Director

The ADOT way Our ethical responsibility

A good reputation is based on trust that is built slowly over time and with much effort.

Once lost, trust is hard to regain.

At ADOT, we work hard to deliver products and services on time, to attend to customer needs and to build trust.

However, I sense that the public has lost a measure of trust in our organization over the last couple of years.

The well-publicized incidents involving MVD employees selling fake credentials, recent accounts of employees taking excessive smoking breaks and making questionable leasing deals on rental properties have damaged ADOT's hard-earned reputation and have caused the public to question other agency actions – to not give us the benefit of the doubt, if you will.

These incidents are organizationally unacceptable and personally embarrassing to me. Unethical behavior has no place in our organization.

So we need to stop it – now!

To help make the point and to keep it in the mind of every employee, I have directed that each employee's EPAS include a statement that describes the standards of behavior that I expect from all. I have further directed that each supervisor discuss these standards with each of their employees.

I have also directed the development of an ADOT code of conduct. This code is a statement of standards of acceptable and appropriate behavior for all ADOT employees statewide. The code is based on ADOT values and contains standards by which we must live. Once developed, the code will be available on the Intranet site. It will be strictly enforced.

Ethical behavior is always important. As employees of the state, we live with the simple truth that everything we say and do is subject to public scrutiny. In our business dealings we have choices to make, and how we handle those choices determines the reputation of our agency. Behaving ethically is up to each of us. If this sounds elementary, it is. We all know right from wrong and most of us act honorably in the discharge of our duties. However, the actions of the few can determine the reputation of the many.

At ADOT we will conduct our business ethically—there will be no exceptions.

Director



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Back from the Winter Olympics, Feldhake brings photos, stories and mementos

By Ron Loar
Editor

He's never won a gold or silver medal, nor for that matter, a bronze one, but Edward (Nippy) Feldhake III, a traffic engineering specialist with ADOT's Tucson Construction Office is a winner of Olympic proportions, just the same.

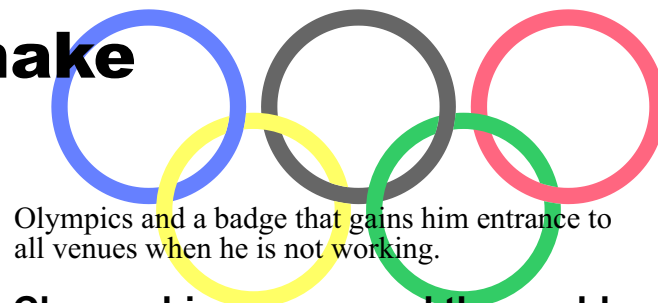
Although he is an avid runner and cyclist, of the nine International Olympics that Feldhake has participated in, he never ran a race, nor cycled in any of them. Nippy's involvement with the Olympics is simply as a volunteer. That's right, every two years the Tucson resident uses his vacation time and pays for his own airfare and incidental expenses just so that he can go to the winter and summer contests to work for free.

His first experience as a National Olympic Committee assistant was in 1984 at the Los Angeles games. He enjoyed the experience so much that he went on to events in Calgary, Canada, and Seoul, South Korea, followed by the games in Barcelona, Spain. In 1996, Feldhake was a bit closer to home when he worked as a construction manager at the Olympic Village in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2000, he traveled to Sydney, Australia, to volunteer as a guide. Back in the United States, Nippy was a housing supervisor at the games in Salt Lake City, Utah. Then it was on to Athens, Greece, in 2004 as a resident assistant. At the Winter Games in Turin, Italy, this year, he was a chauffeur for the Australian team officials.

For all his time and effort, Feldhake receives the traditional uniform worn by all Olympic

volunteers: a T-shirt, pair of red shoes, winter jacket, two red and yellow sweatshirts, ear muffs, gloves and a small backpack. He receives one free meal for every day he works, free transportation on trains and buses while at the

Flags line the entrance to the snowboarding venue at the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy, where Nippy Feldhake of Tucson was a volunteer worker. The Alps just north of the event are in the background.



Olympics and a badge that gains him entrance to all venues when he is not working.

Charms his way around the world

It was Nippy's charm and disarming smile that got him into restricted athlete areas where he got to meet and talk with the athletes. Wearing the assistant's uniform and badge got him into the venues, but the better views were in the athlete seating areas. He says, "I had seen five events in two days without a ticket. I just walked in. At the men's 1500 meter track event, I got into the athlete seating area. They were great seats. I walked past the old guy who was checking passes and I smiled and said 'ciao.' He knew I was not allowed, but was not going to say anything."

Nippy comments on the good nature of Italians, and raves about their food. "Yes, the Italians really know how to cook," he says. A vegetarian for many years, Nippy tells of eating "real Italian pizza with fresh tomatoes," and a plate of zucchini blossoms stuffed with potatoes, onions, eggs and goat cheese.

At the Olympic Games, Feldhake always finds time to look up old friends he has made at previous games—athletes, officials, volunteers and spectators. Everyone takes part in trading pins from different countries and events. Swapping the small lapel-pin jewelry has long been as much a part of the Olympics as the sporting events. Each team has the pins made up in advance of the games and athletes trade them among themselves as well as with visitors, volunteers and officials.

(Continued on page 4)

Back from the Olympics

(Continued from page 3)

Even the sponsors make their own logo pins for distribution. Some pins, more ornate than others, are bejeweled with small, semi-precious stones. All have the name of the country of origin, and the year.

The practice of trading mementos is as old as the Olympic Games. In ancient Greece, participants frequently brought along items to trade with other athletes. Early games saw trading of such items as tea, spices, exotic stones and shells, as well as pieces of papyrus on which messages of good will were written. "There are dealers who try to get the pins and sell them for a profit," says Feldhake. "If I suspect someone is a dealer for profit, I will not trade with them."

Serious about sports

Nippy (a life-long nickname) takes his sporting events seriously. His Tucson office is adorned with pictures of bicyclists and Olympians, along with the customary photos of family and friends. In high school, he literally ran a paper route. He delivered the newspapers door-to-door while running. While a sophomore, he met Olympic Medalist George Young and was inspired to run track events. While studying civil engineering at Northern Arizona University, Feldhake participated in track events and began running marathons.

As a young man, Feldhake began suffering foot injuries and knee problems from all the running he did. On the advice of his physician, he took up cycling as a sport and was soon doing long-distance cycling. "I have a keen desire to compete," Feldhake asserts.

For all his interest in athletics, especially running and cycling, one might wonder why Feldhake never

entered the Olympics. But once he did. "I had the determination, but not the talent. My qualifying times just weren't good enough," he relates. Nippy was so determined to enter the Olympics that he and two other cycling friends in 1990 began training for the Olympics and started writing letters of interest to countries that did not have Olympic teams. A letter to the governor of American Samoa garnered him a visit to the small island nation to meet with the governor, and after promises to pay their own way, the three-man team believed they were on their way to compete in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain.

While preparing for the games, they learned that the International Olympic Committee would not allow American Samoa to enter their team. All the large nations had qualified for positions and because the American Samoan team had not raced in the previous events, they did not qualify. After training so hard for the event, Nippy and friends could only go to the Barcelona games and watch the cycling races from the sidelines.


But that didn't diminish Nippy's love for cycling and running. He still runs several nights a week and participates in marathons and long-distance cycling. He even had his bicycle shipped to Turin so that he could ride the Italian countryside when he wasn't working at the Olympic village.

Speaks four and-a-half languages

Traveling around the world has never presented a problem for Feldhake. Cultural differences are taken in stride and he has learned that his ever-present smile and congeniality is understood in any language. "I speak four and-a-half languages," he says.

"I was born and raised in America, so I speak American English. I attended the Olympics in

Canada, so I speak Canadian English. When I went to London for the games, I learned to speak the Queen's English, and in Australia, I learned to speak Aussie English."

"I learned a smattering of Spanish from my Hispanic mother; that's the 'half,'" he says with a laugh. "No one on the Olympic Committee ever bothered asking me what languages I speak. They just assumed I am bilingual," quips Nippy, who is now making plans for his trip to the 2008 Olympics in China. 



Olympic mascots Snow, left, and Ice, pose with Nippy Feldhake of Tucson Construction Office while he was working as a volunteer at the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy.

Toss the pencils! Getting driver license just went high-tech with electronic testing

By Jim Cullison

MVD Project Support Manager

The next time you take a driver license exam you can leave your pencils at home. MVD is doing away with the pencil-and-paper version of the exam and replacing it with an electronic test that saves time and gives the customer service staff greater flexibility in measuring the effectiveness of the testing program.


Applicants use a touch-screen console to answer the multiple-choice questions. About half of MVD's 60 statewide offices now have the program, called Q-Test.

Not only does the Q-Test system administer the exam, it also grades it automatically as the applicant answers the questions. When the applicant answers enough questions correctly to reach a passing grade, or misses so many that a failing grade is inevitable, the system stops the exam, since there's no need to go further.

The system rotates the test questions and answers randomly, so several applicants can be testing at the same time and none will have the same version. Q-Test is used for all classes of driver license – the standard operator's license, commercial and motorcycle. Once the test is completed, the system automatically updates the applicant's driver license record on the MVD database.

The exam can be taken in English or Spanish, and the console also has a headset for applicants who request an audio test. Under the manual system, a customer service representative had to read the questions to applicants who wanted an audio test.

"It's a tremendous time-saver," says Anne Yanofsky, manager of the MVD office in Scottsdale. The electronic exam is particularly efficient in the larger MVD offices, where many tests are given every day. Overall, Q-Test saves about three to four hours a day over the manual system in reduced time for administering, grading and data entry. The automated system tracks each test, showing the time and date taken, customer's name, type of test, score and result. The system stores the data and allows MVD to run a variety of reports for tracking purposes, such as number of tests taken, pass-fail rates and results by demographics."

According to Charlene Knapp, assistant director for customer service, all MVD offices will eventually have the electronic testing. "As Arizona's population continues to grow, systems like Q-Test are extremely valuable for managing customer service activities and allowing staff members to serve the increasing number of customers visiting MVD offices." 

Technology makes business card process easier, faster


 **Ordering your ADOT business cards just got easier and faster!**

Employees can now place their order for business cards on line. "The electronic application will go directly to the ADOT print shop where the cards will be produced in about half the time previously required," says Sharon Chavez, manager of Support Services Section.

Cards will continue to be produced in quantities of 250 in the same purple, teal and black colors as in the past. Once completed, the cards will be distributed via the ADOT mail room to the address on the card.

"Because the new process is done electronically and directly with the print shop, cards can be processed, printed and delivered so much faster," Chavez says. The electronic form can be accessed on the ADOT Intranet under Forms and Documents/Administrative Access, or through the Alpha listing in the same place as the previous business card request form.

Using the electronic form, employees can fill in the blanks, and have an opportunity to review their data and make corrections before pressing "send." Chavez cautions employees to proofread their data before sending the form. "The employee filling out the request is responsible for assuring its accuracy. What is submitted is what will be printed," she said.

Employees who have recently submitted the old paper form for business cards, do not need to re-submit on line. Those orders are already being processed. 

It's a risk(y) business – but someone has to do it

By Cindy Eiserman

Risk Management Deputy Manager

Risk management is an inherent part of everyone's job within ADOT. Whether you work in roadway design, construction, maintenance or administration, you make daily decisions that affect the security of co-workers and the public.

The people in ADOT's Risk Management Section are dedicated to making safety an important part of your work as well as to serving the public's roadway concerns.

To do this, George Wendt, manager, and team members Richard Kirkevold, Ross Levine, Julie McNeely-Kirwan, Sue Olson, Frank Parker, Jack Richardson, Maurice Thompson, and Elizabeth Vega wear many different hats.

We're collision investigators. Between them, the three members of this team have more than 100 years of collision investigation experience. They're called upon to investigate fatal and serious injury collisions on our state highways. Primarily, their investigations consist of taking photographs and making drive-through videos; however, they also take vital measurements and perform other research when necessary.

We provide litigation support. We are involved in every major liability claim filed against ADOT, from initial claims investigation through trial or settlement. To help the Attorney General's Office prepare for tort litigation, we

research documents and locate people and information that will assist in ADOT's defense.

We serve as custodian of public records.

Under Arizona law and the Federal Freedom of Information Act of 1966, every government agency must have an assigned section or custodian to respond to public records requests. The goal is to have open government. Our office receives public records requests and researches the agency to find documents and information in response to a public information request. Our section also offers guidance on records retention for the agency. If you get a request from any citizen, attorney or claims adjuster who does not work on behalf of the state, refer them to the Risk Management Office.

We do collections work.

Since the State of Arizona is self-insured through the Arizona Department of Administration, ADOT does not buy outside insurance coverage for a majority of our losses, such as auto damage, property damage or theft. But, because the state excludes coverage for ADOT's primary asset, the highway infrastructure and all of its features, our office facilitates collections

from insurance companies, commercial companies and private citizens for damage that they cause to roadways.

We're dedicated to prevention. Loss prevention efforts are at the forefront of our duties. We receive notification of past incidents, near misses, citizen complaints and general observations and report them to the appropriate maintenance, traffic or other ADOT personnel. We also participate in research projects geared to preventing loss.

(Continued on page 7)



Members of the Office of Risk Management are, from left to right, Jack Richardson, collision investigator; Rick Kirkevold, collision investigation supervisor; Sue Olson, litigation supervisor; Frank Parker, collision investigator; Julie McNeely-Kirwan, litigation investigator; George Wendt, manager; Elizabeth Vega, collector; Cindy Eiserman, deputy risk manager; Ross Levine, administrative assistant; and Maurice Thompson, collector.

Photo by Lily M. Gutierrez

Risk(y) business

(Continued from page 6)

We're the claims department, too. Risk Management is the liaison for property and auto losses. We work with all sections to facilitate the filing and settlement of claims for the agency's property, including automobiles, buildings and equipment.

We give guidance on insurance matters. Before entering into contracts and agreements, we can help make sure the appropriate insurance language and coverage are present. We also facilitate issuance of certificates of insurance.

We offer training in:

- Loss prevention relating to highway maintenance operations (with information and guidance on the litigation process)
- Photographing collision sites
- General claims training

Risk management is everyone's business. Remember, we're here to help you.

For technical advice about ADOT-related matters dealing with insurance, contracts, research, claims, litigation, citizen complaints, public records or collections, call the Office of Risk Management.

602.712.7327

Aeronautics Division announces art contest winners

By Kim Stevens

Aeronautics Division

Air Sports and Nature in Harmony was the theme for this year's International Aviation Art Contest co-sponsored by the ADOT Aeronautics Division. For the first time, a single school, Desert View Elementary in Page, Arizona, captured first, second and third place. Arizona schools captured a total of five state awards.

"Each year the contest attracts student entries from all across the state," said Carole Glenn, contest coordinator for the Aeronautics Division. Arizona has always been a leader in generating the most participants in the annual contest. "The plaques we award to the students have their individual winning artwork captured on them. We also make special awards to art teachers that have done an outstanding job of promoting the contest and inspiring their students," said Glenn. "Our goal is to encourage and involve more students in Arizona than any other state in the country as we promote aviation and art," she said. "The artwork we receive is incredible, and we want to share that talent with the world."

Representatives of the Aeronautics Division were on hand as awards were presented to students and art teacher Terrie Simmons. "Many were impressed that the ADOT representatives came all the way up to Page to present these awards," said Simmons. "It meant a lot to these kids."

Contest winners from Desert Valley Elementary School were Cydny Mann, Kinjo Slim, Raquel Sloan, Austin Joe and Sam Gandara. Other contest winners and their schools included Rene Valenzuela Jr. of Chinle High School; Dominick Washburn, Old Vail Middle School; Stefan Barker, A Baka Academy, Chino Valley; and Nora Flynn of Pinnacle Peak Elementary in Scottsdale.

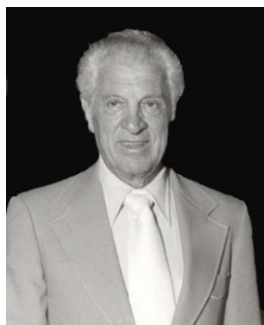
Students in all private, public, parochial, charter and home schools in Arizona are encouraged to participate in the annual contest. Winning entries at the state level are submitted to Washington, D.C., for the national competition, and national winners are then sent to Paris, France, for the international contest. The contest is divided into three age categories, with first-, second- and third-place prizes awarded to the students in each age group.

Co-sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Aeronautic Association, NASA and the National Association of State Aviation Officials, in cooperation with the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, the contest's mission is to motivate and encourage young people to become more familiar with the aeronautics, engineering and science fields.

J. Vercellino, first Aeronautics director inducted into Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame

By Kim Stevens
Aeronautics Division

The man responsible for early aviation development in Arizona, James Vercellino, was recently inducted into the Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame. The late Mr. Vercellino has been called the founder of the Grand Canyon National Park Airport and is credited with instituting major tax reforms for aircraft licensing in the state.




J. Vercellino

In 1948, Governor Dan Garvey appointed Vercellino as one of the original board members of the Arizona Aviation Authority. He was appointed director of that organization in 1957. A year later, the Arizona Aviation Authority was renamed the Arizona Department of Aeronautics. In 1974, the Department of Aeronautics and the Department of Highways merged to form the Arizona Department of Transportation. Vercellino was named director of the Aeronautics Division, the position he held until his retirement in 1976.

Vercellino was involved in the planning, development, maintenance and improvement of more than 100 airports in the state, and with the cooperation and support of United States Senator Barry Goldwater, built the Grand Canyon National Park Airport, currently owned and operated by ADOT. "I conceived the whole idea (of the Grand Canyon Airport) and I made the site selection," Vercellino was quoted as saying in an August 1995 issue of *Newsbeat*, a forerunner of **TRANSEND**.

His interest in aviation began after taking an airplane ride with a friend. In 1939, he obtained his pilot's license while living in Douglas. Following service in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, Vercellino started a flying business at Sky Harbor Airport.

During ceremonies at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Vercellino was inducted into the Hall of Fame. Members of his family received the award. The Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame honors Arizonans who have made outstanding contributions in the field of aviation and who, by their achievements, have brought special recognition to the state of Arizona. 

Milestones in Service

The following employees attained milestones for their length of service with ADOT:

40 years

Thomas J. Kent, ITD, Show Low Construction

30 years

Julius Crank, ITD, Kayenta Maintenance
John H. Semmens, TPD, ATRC

25 years

Jean A. Agan, MVD, West Central Region
Lydia A. Cano, TSG, Support Desk
Pamela K. Pelech, MVD, Central Support

20 years

Renee H. Castillo, MVD, Prescott
Carolyn Deobler, TSG, Equipment Services
Suryalata Gunnala, TSG, DDL Printing
Steven T. Hartman, TSG, AZ Highways
Teresa A. Hensley, MVD, Bullhead City
Debra K. Knoll, TSG, Accounts Payable
Rosemary Martinez, ITD, Right of Way Titles
Wesley D. McAllister, TSG, Fredonia Shop
Joanne P. Passmore, MVD, Scottsdale
Mark E. Zeibig, TSG, Truck Shop

Santan Freeway nearing completion

By Matt Burdick

Community Relations Director

Construction crews are finishing the last construction items as ADOT prepares to open the final 12 miles of the Loop 202 Santan Freeway through Gilbert and Mesa. When it opens in June, it will link with the rest of the Loop 202 to provide a continuous freeway in the southeast Valley extending from Interstate 10 to the US 60 Superstition Freeway.

The opening will mark a major milestone for ADOT and the many employees who have worked over the past 20 years on the development of the Santan Freeway.

Jim Romero with Valley Project Management and Vince Li with ADOT's Pre-design Section, have been involved throughout the development of the Santan Freeway corridor in Gilbert and Mesa.

"The Santan Freeway through Gilbert has been a model in cooperative planned development of transportation, infrastructure and land," said Romero, who has worked closely with the Town of Gilbert as the Santan Freeway corridor manager.

"Changing the profile of the Santan Freeway between Pecos and Higley roads from an elevated to a depressed freeway is an example how ADOT and Gilbert worked together to address challenges facing the project," said Li, who oversaw the preliminary design on the Santan Freeway projects through Gilbert.

ADOT and Gilbert worked to realign Pecos, Ray and Greenfield roads to facilitate the freeway crossing and planned development, added detention basins and built a new interchange for improved local access. Romero and Li credit the partnership with the Town of Gilbert with expediting the project by completing utility, street and bridge construction efforts in advance of the freeway construction.


ADOT and Gilbert also worked to provide amenities to the community as part of the freeway development and to create recreational uses of freeway drainage basins and a multi-use path along the Santan Freeway. When heavy rains occur, water will flow into the parks as part of the freeway's drainage system. At other times, the parks will be accessible for public use.

Plans for the Santan Freeway began in the mid-1980s to provide a route around the southeast Valley following voter approval of Proposition 300, which imposed a half-cent sales tax in Maricopa County to build new miles of freeway.

A pedestrian bridge spanning 200 feet across the Santan Freeway near Ray Road was built by the Town of Gilbert to resemble the

nearby Union Pacific Railroad bridge. Art treatments along the freeway bridges and walls carry forward this railroad-inspired theme and pay tribute to the town's agricultural history.

Gilbert City Council also passed a noise ordinance and paid for an additional seven miles of noise barriers along the Santan Freeway to mitigate noise for its residents.

Romero and Li both expressed pride and satisfaction with the anticipated opening of the Santan Freeway. 



Construction crews put finishing touches on the Loop 202 Santan Freeway near Mesa and Gilbert. This section of freeway is expected to open next month.

Photo by Craig Morley

Donated leave benefits fellow employees

By Rob Waddell
Human Resources

Everyone needs a helping hand once in a while, especially during a time of unexpected illness or injury. ADOT's donated annual leave program makes it possible for employees who have exhausted their sick and annual leave to receive contributions of annual leave from fellow employees.

In 1986, the Arizona Department of Administration implemented a program that allows State of Arizona employees to donate one or more hours of annual leave to another employee of the same agency or to an immediate family member from another agency who has a seriously incapacitating and extended illness or injury. Over the past 20 years, many ADOT employees have donated their leave to other employees specifically for this purpose.

During 2005, ADOT employees donated approximately 11,000 hours amounting to almost \$200,000 to 95 of their fellow employees who were out of the office in a medical-leave-without-pay status. One employee who received donated annual leave said, "I could take hours telling you what all it helped me accomplish, like pay the doctor bills and keep the house warm and food in the house. I am so grateful to those who donated their leave so that my family and I would not have to do without."

There is no pool of donated annual leave available. A donor is required to specify which eligible employee will receive their donation. Prior to receiving any donated leave, the potential recipient must meet certain criteria and put their request for donated leave in writing to their supervisor. According to Rosa Lopez, coordinator of the Donated Annual Leave Program for ADOT, meeting the criteria does not guarantee an employee will receive donations. It is the choice of individual employees to donate as they wish.


Recipients depend on the generosity of their fellow employees. The intent of the program is to assist employees who are in need of additional income when they otherwise may not have a check coming. Loss of income due to medical and health issues can put a strain on families. Rosa speaks from experience, because when she found herself on extended medical leave as result of a serious traffic accident, she became a beneficiary of the same program she administers.

An anonymous beneficiary of leave donation said, "I am so appreciative that there is such a

program in place for people in need. Saying thank you doesn't seem to be enough. I don't know what I would have done without my extended family."

Donations assist employees in maintaining the cost of their insurance premiums, which out of pocket would cost an employee upwards of \$500 a month. The dollar value of donated leave is adjusted proportionately in relation to the salary of the contributing employee and the salary of the recipient. Any unused donated leave is returned to the contributors on a pro-rata basis.

The Arizona State Legislature recently passed HB 2231 which provides for the annual leave program to include pregnancy and childbirth. The measure was signed into law by Governor Janet Napolitano, and will be effective 90 days after the adjournment of the current legislative session.

If you have any questions about the program or wish to donate annual leave, review the Donation of Annual Leave Policy or contact Rosa Lopez at 602.712.8173. 

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION WEEK
May 14 – 20, 2006

New Burro Creek Bridge will carry northbound traffic on US 93

With two bridges open, more than 12,000 vehicles a day are expected to travel between Wickenburg and Kingman. Eventually, US 93 will be a completely divided roadway, part of the CANAMEX Highway. The new bridge, right, mirrors the original bridge which was built 40 years ago.



Workers apply finishing touches in preparation for the opening of the new bridge.



Photos by Dave McDarby



Dedicating the \$26 million bridge are Tom Thurman, Yavapai County Board of Supervisors; Dave Lane, Councilman, Town of Wickenburg; John Reid, BLM; Carol Springer, Yavapai County Board of Supervisors; Victor Mendez, ADOT Director; Sam Elters, State Engineer; Steve Thomas, FHWA; John Meagher, Traylor Brothers, Inc.; and Bill Kelton, R.E. Monks Construction Company.

East Flagstaff B-40 interchange dedicated


By PK McMahon
Associate Editor

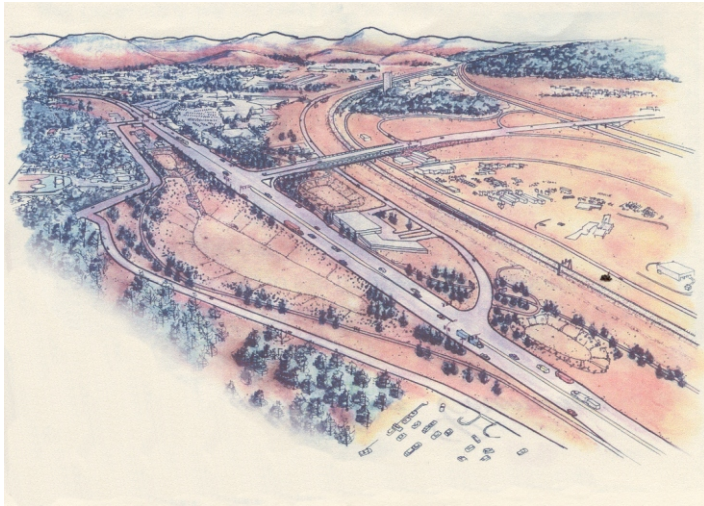
Wielding a ceremonial shovel, Governor Janet Napolitano broke ground for a major new traffic interchange in Flagstaff. The project, which is expected to take about 18 months to complete, was officially launched Saturday, April 29.

ADOT Director Victor Mendez, serving as master of ceremonies at the event, observed that the interchange will ease congestion for traffic exiting Interstate 40 and accessing Flagstaff Mall. He said that extensive environmental impact studies and a number of citizen-input meetings were conducted as part of the design process.

Governor Napolitano, who spoke to a crowd gathered at the construction site, lauded the planning that had gone into designing the

Interchange, calling the project “. . . an important milestone on the road to upgrading Flagstaff’s infrastructure. This is precisely the type of project that will keep Flagstaff on track to handle the anticipated growth. The new East Flagstaff Traffic Interchange is the most expensive contract ever awarded in northern Arizona by the Arizona Department of Transportation. It’s going to have a major impact on the quality of life for the entire region as it relieves congestion and gives folks better access to shopping and recreation.”

Vastco, Inc., the construction contractor, has worked closely with ADOT to phase the project so that traffic will be disrupted as little as possible during construction. As the project progresses, more information will be available on the Web at www.azdot.gov/highways/districts/Flagstaff/current_projects.asp. 



An artist's rendering shows the B-40 highway interchange in East Flagstaff.

ASRS Retirement Report

Director's Outreach

A Director's Outreach meeting will be held May 2 at 12 noon at the Arizona State Retirement System office. According to ASRS Director Paul Matson, members and retirees are encouraged to attend to discuss issues and exchange information about the state retirement system.

The informal meeting, which is open to members, retirees and employer representatives, will be held in the Board Room on the 10th floor of the ASRS Office, 3300 North Central Ave.

Similar sessions are planned for June 22, 12:30 p.m. at the Tucson ASRS Office, 7660 East Broadway Blvd., Suite 108; and October 12, 10 a.m. at the Sierra Vista Public Library, 2600 East Tacoma Street.

Reservations are not required to attend the Director's Outreach meetings.

Educational seminars

The Member Services Division of the ASRS conducts educational meetings and seminars for members anticipating retirement. Discussion at the meetings centers on procedures for filing retirement forms, Social Security benefits, health insurance and benefits options. Date and location of meetings can be found on the ASRS Web site: www.azasrs.gov/web/index.do

Jeff Boyd designs a winner

By Lynn Sugiyama

Transportation Planning Division

A large, detailed wall map of Arizona, designed by Jeff Boyd, a Geographic Information System (GIS) analyst with the Transportation Planning Division, won first place in a contest at the 19th annual GIS-T (Transportation) Symposium held in Columbus, Ohio.

Measuring 36 x 48 inches, the color relief map shows the state's highway system, cities, Indian reservations, national parks and forest boundaries, lakes, military installations, mountain ranges and other topography. It is available as a print-on-demand publication. That is, it is not mass-produced, but printed only on request.


A panel of peers judged the maps based on:

- Functionality
- Making complex data accessible – combining words, numbers and pictures
- Properly chosen format and design
- Reflecting a balance, proportion, and a sense of relevant scale
- Having a narrative quality that tells a story about the data
- Drawing done in a professional manner with attention to details



Jeff Boyd of the Transportation Planning Division won first place in a national GIS contest for his design of this Arizona map.

The symposium is an event where government and private industry discuss the use of GIS software for transportation, and learn of new technologies. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Urban and Regional Information System Association (URISA), the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), and the Highway Engineers Exchange Program (HEEP) sponsor the symposium.

Jeff developed the complex map using ArcGIS 9.1 software. He has a GIS certificate from the University of California, Riverside, and has worked with GIS for two and a half years. Prior to joining ADOT, he worked in the information technology field. 

Retirements from ADOT

Employees retiring in April from ADOT, as reported by Human Resources, include:

Manuel M. Arvizu, 10 years, ITD, Traffic Group

Maryann Berestka, 10 years, MVD, Division of Operational Support Services

Charles B. Bitner, 6 years, MVD, Director's Office

Manuel Celaya, 16 years, ITD, Maintenance Group

Robert Grant Cooper, 32 years, ITD, Roadway Engineering

Bertha M. Manasco, 7 years, MVD, Customer Service Program

Ronald K. Mann, 16 years, TSG, Facilities Management and Support Group

Comments and Kudos

With a 200-mile journey ahead of her, a Cottonwood, Arizona, resident was stranded with a flat tire on a remote section of State Route 77, south of Globe. Diane Joens said she was feeling “pretty frantic about my predicament” when an ADOT highway construction worker came to her assistance. Mrs. Joens sent the following letter of gratitude to Victor Mendez, director:

Dear Mr. Mendez:

On March 6, I was returning to Cottonwood, Arizona, after visiting my mother who lives in SaddleBrooke [northeast of Tucson]. Between Winkelman and Globe, my front tire blew out and I was stranded. There was no cell phone service in the area, and I have to admit, I am ‘tire-changing-challenged.’

I felt pretty frantic about my predicament. Fortunately, a Good Samaritan helped me out. The Good Samaritan was ADOT Transportation Construction Technician III John C. Whalley of the Intermodal Transportation Division, Globe Construction.

He first stopped to remove pieces of tire from the highway. I think he saw the panicked look on my face, too! Since the cell phone didn’t work, he said he could make one call via his radio to his office. I do have AAA service, and we were talking about making a call to them because my husband was several hours away. He then offered to change my tire and said I could be on my way more quickly. I can’t tell you how relieved I felt at his offer, not really wanting to be in a remote area by myself with no cell phone coverage.

Even though I felt badly because – in my eyes – I felt I was inconveniencing another person, he was very kind about it all. After he changed my tire, he advised me to drive slowly, and he followed me into Globe where he turned off.

I want to sincerely thank ADOT, and most especially Mr. Whalley, for his generosity in helping me out of a challenging predicament. I will forever be grateful.

Sincerely,

Diane Joens

Next month in

TRANSEND

For the June issue of TRANSEND, we are working on these stories and more:

- Grand Avenue/59th Ave. Project
- Second installment of Risk Management
- Tips for driving in Arizona duststorms
- Civil Rights DBE Conference coverage
- Santan Freeway dedication photos



3rd Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

Sponsored by
Women in Transportation Service
Metropolitan Phoenix Chapter

Wednesday, May 24
ASU Karsten Golf Course
1125 E. Rio Salado Parkway, Tempe

7 A.M. Registration 7:30 A.M. Shotgun Start
Lunch Awards Raffle Drawings
on the patio following play

The WTS Metropolitan Phoenix Chapter annually awards over \$5,000 in scholarships to women enrolled full time in transportation related degree programs at Arizona universities. All proceeds from the golf tournament go to support the scholarship program.

WTS
Metropolitan Phoenix Chapter